



Lead Update

RI Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program

March 2008

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Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program www.health.ri.gov/lead

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HEDIS Lead Screening Measure Now Available

Health Effectiveness Data Information Set (HEDIS) is a tool used by health plans to measure performance. The measures are used to compare performance across plans, and also to allow plans to identify areas where they need to make improvements. In September of 2007, a HEDIS measure was developed for lead screening. This measure is defined as "the percentage of children two years of age who had one or more capillary or venous blood tests for lead poisoning by their second birthday". The population used in this measure will be composed of children who meet the following criteria:

- Turned two years of age in the previous year,
- Are currently enrolled in Medicaid,
- Were enrolled in Medicaid on the day they turned two,
- Were continuously enrolled in Medicaid 12 months prior to their second birthday.

The Managed Care Organizations (MCOs) will identify the population that meets the criteria for this analysis, and will submit these data to the Lead Program in February 2008. The Lead Program will then provide the MCOs with the screening history for each child in the population. The MCOs will determine the screening rate, and make these data available to us in June 2008.

While the lead screening HEDIS measure will be calculated and shared with the Lead Program, this measure will not be reported at the national level. Since this is the first year the measure is being used, the data will be considered a baseline.

In addition to working with the MCOs on the HEDIS measure the Lead Program is also working with the MCOs to increase the proportion of children who have two lead tests by 36 months of age. One effort to accomplish this will be a data match in the fall of 2008 that will identify children in need of screening. The MCOs will then work with providers to identify ways to reach their patients, either via KIDSNET or other methods.

Please continue to support lead screening in your community, and contact Jodie.Garnetto@health.ri.gov to request additional copies of the Lead Screening Guidelines posters.

For questions about the lead screening efforts with the MCOs, please contact Magaly.Angeloni@health.ri.gov.

Effectiveness of Lead Screening Reminder Postcards

Rhode Island law requires that children be screened for lead annually until the age of six. In an effort to promote lead screening, in 1999 the Rhode Island Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program (RI CLPPP) began sending postcards to families of children who were turning one year of age, reminding them to get their children screened for lead when they went to see the pediatrician for their children's one-year well child visit. RI CLPPP recently evaluated the impact of the postcards on lead screening rates.

The evaluation compared compliance with screening guidelines between children turning one year of age in 2006 who were sent a postcard, and children turning one year of age in 2007 who were not sent a postcard. Compliance with screening guidelines was defined as having at least one lead screening test by 18 months of age. Compliance was 81.3% among those children receiving a postcard, compared to 80.2% among those not receiving a postcard. In addition to overall screening rate, we investigated whether the postcards had an impact on the age at which the lead test was done. The distribution of age at test was the same between the two groups of children.

These findings indicate that the lead screening reminder postcards are having minimal impact on lead screening rates. Rather than sending the postcards, RI CLPPP is going to explore other methods to increase screening rates and will be implementing other outreach methodologies later this year. For questions on these efforts, contact Daniela.Quilliam@health.ri.gov.

Poison Prevention Week March 17-21, 2008

The Regional Center for Poison Control and Prevention is the poison center that serves Rhode Island. It provides free, life-saving diagnosis, and treatment advice.

The Poison Control Center provides 24-hour treatment advice to healthcare professionals and the public on all types of poisoning. If you are not sure if a product maybe poisonous or for information on how to handle potential poisons, please contact the Poison Control Center:

1-800-222-1222 or visit
www.maripoisoncenter.org

Lead Centers Offering Home Visits to Children

The four lead centers received funding from the Healthy Kids Collaborative to conduct a variety of outreach efforts including to offer home visits to families of children who had a first time venous blood lead level between 10 and 14 µg/dL.

These visits are geared toward educating the family about preventing further exposures to lead. It is expected that many families will accept this free service.

The lead centers are offering these visits to children screened since January 1, 2008.

Most Recent Efforts Related to Healthy Housing

The RI Department of Health has engaged key contacts within the Department in conversations about potential activities that could contribute to the healthy housing agenda. It is expected that those activities and new ideas will become part of the overall healthy housing plan in the next few months, and will be shared with the larger group at the Healthy Housing Collaborative.

For questions and/or suggestions on future content of this section, or to become a member of the Healthy Housing Collaborative, please contact:
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